GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5348
ANSWERED ON:28.08.2001
DOWRY ABUSE
JAYABEN B. THAKKAR

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that inspite of various legal provisions, laws and Act, around 25,000 brides either being killed or maimed every year in the country; and

(b) if so, the efforts being made by the Government to eradicte in totality, the dowry abuse?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) A Statement showing the statistical data on number of dowry deaths and torture by husband and his relatives reported in the country, compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi for the years from 1997 to 2000 is attached.

(b) To prohibit giving or taking of dowry, Government has enacted the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. Sections 304B and 498A of the Indian Penal Code also deal with 'dowry death' and the offence of cruelty, both mental and physical, towards a married woman by her husband or relatives. Section 113-B of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides that Courts may presume the guilt of the husband or relative who had subjected the women to cruelty in connection with dowry.

The direct responsibility for implementing these laws is that of State Governments and the mechanisms under them. The Government has, however, advised all State Governments to appoint Dowry Prohibition Officers with independent charge and to notify rules under the provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act.

The National Commission for Women is in the process of reviewing the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 to make its provisions more stringent and effective.

Since the menace of dowry is a reflection of women's low status in society, Government have taken a number of steps to raise the status of women and to change societal attitudes towards girls and women. These include media campaigns, awareness generation camps, spreading legal literacy, counselling, legal aid, support to voluntary agencies and schemes for the socio economic empowerment of women.

The recently adopted National Policy for the Empowerment of Women is also committed to eliminating the incidence of all forms of violence against women, including those arising from customs such as dowry.

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PART (a) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5348 FOR 28.8.2001 REGARDING DOWRY ABUSE BY SMT. JAYABEN B. THAKKAR.

Incidence of crime committed against women from 1997 to 2000 (upto available months)

(As per information given by the National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs)

S.No.	Crime Head	YEAR			
		1997	1998	1999	2000+
1.	Dowry Death	6006	6975	6699	6679

2.	Torture	36592	41376	43823	38652

Source: 1997 to 1999 – Crime in India.
2000 – Monthly Crime Statistics.

+ figures for 2000 are not completely available due to non-availability of data for some months from Gujarat, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli.